

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

INFO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

CHEROKEE, WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, MASS, US, EG

SUBJECT: SADAT'S REQUEST RE C-130'S

REFS: (A) CAIRO 5453 (B) CAIRO 141558Z FEB 78 (C)
CAIRO 5803

1. TOPIC OF ADDITIONAL C-130'S DID NOT COME UP DURING
CONVERSATION BETWEEN PRESIDENTS CARTER AND SADAT. RATHER,
IT WAS RAISED BY SADAT WHEN HE MET WITH SECDEF BROWN.
BROWN'S RESPONSE WAS AS DESCRIBED IN PARA 2 OF REFTEL A.

2. STATE AND DOD LEGAL STAFFS HAVE CONCLUDED THAT IT WOULD
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NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR USG TO TRANSFER TO EGYPT C-130'S
PURCHASED EARLIER BY LIBYA.

3. PURSUANT TO PRESIDENT SADAT'S CONVERSATION WITH SECDEF
BROWN, AIR FORCE HAS BEEN LOOKING INTO POSSIBILITY OF
LEASING C-130'S FROM USAF INVENTORY. BETWEEN FIVE AND
TEN OF THESE COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR EGYPTIAN USE UN-

TIL THEY COULD BE REPLACED BY DELIVERY FROM PRODUCTION. THE BASE COST OF LEASING WOULD BE DOLLARS 54,000 PER AIRCRAFT MONTH PLUS DOLLARS 584 PER FLIGHT HOUR OF USAGE. THIS PRICE WOULD NOT INCLUDE ANY CONTRACTOR SUPPORT OR USAF AUGMENTATION WHICH MIGHT BE NECESSARY, NOR DOES IT

MAKE ANY PROVISION FOR SPARES, SUPPORT, OR PREPARATION COSTS EITHER PRIOR TO DELIVERY OR PRIOR TO RETURN OF THE AIRCRAFT. GIVEN QUESTION OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS FOR GOE IN CONNECTION WITH ALREADY AGREED-TO ACCELERATED DELIVERY (REFTEL B), RELATIVELY EXPENSIVE LEASE PROGRAM MAY NOT OFFER A REAL SOLUTION. (FYI ONLY: WE HAVE THE LEGAL AUTHORITY TO WAIVE SOME OR ALL OF THE COSTS IF WE SO CHOOSE.)

4. NONETHELESS, SINCE THIS IS ONLY WAY WE SEE TO MEET GOE PERCEIVED NEEDS IN AN EXPEDITIOUS MANNER, YOU SHOULD TELL SADAT THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO IMPLEMENT SUCH A PROGRAM IF HE SO DESIRES. IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD THAT FINANCING WOULD BE GOE RESPONSIBILITY, AND THAT PAYMENT MUST BE MADE IN ADVANCE. WITH THIS IN MIND, GOE MIGHT RECONSIDER REQUEST SO AS TO APPLY ANY AVAILABLE FUNDS TO ACCELERATED DELIVERY OF ALREADY PROGRAMMED C-130'S.

5. WE HAVE ALSO REVIEWED POSSIBILITY OF APPROACHING IRAN OR SAUDI ARABIA AS POSSIBLE ALTERNATE SOURCES OF C-130'S
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TO MEET SADAT'S SHORT-TERM NEEDS:

A. RE IRAN, WE HAVE DISCUSSED THIS WITH AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN WHO IS IN WASHINGTON. CONSENSUS IS THAT IRAN HAS NO C-130'S TO SPARE (GOI HAS FLEET OF 55, BUT IS SEEKING AN ADDITIONAL 100 TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT FOR USE IN IRAN). AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN IS MOST RELUCTANT TO APPROACH IRANISANS ON THIS MATTER IN VIEW OF OTHER APPROACHES WE HAVE MADE TO IRAN CONCERNING ASSISTANCE TO THIRD PARTIES. DEPARTMENT AGREES.

B. SAUDI INVENTORY OF C-130'S IS EVEN MORE LIMITED THAN IRAN'S. IN ADDITION, OVERRIDING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS MAKE IT INADVISABLE TO SOLICIT OR OTHERWISE ENCOURAGE A SAUDI TRANSFER OF AIRCRAFT TO EGYPT. DURING CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON THE MIDDLE EAST ARMS PACKAGE A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION, WITHIN CONGRESS AND BY OUTSIDE INTEREST GROUPS, WILL BE FOCUSED ON POSSIBLE TRANSFER OF SAUDI ARMS TO CONFRONTATION STATES. WE ARE TAKING POSITION THAT SAUDI ARABIA HAS NO EXCESS EQUIPMENT FOR TRANSFER AND THAT THERE IS NO SAUDI INTENTION TO TRANSFER MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ARAB CONFRONTATION STATES. LARGELY FOR THIS REASON THE DEPARTMENT HAS CONSISTENTLY DIS-

COURAGED EFFORTS TO INVOLVE SAUDI ARABIA IN MILITARY
ASSISTANCE ARRANGEMENTS INVOLVING TRANSFER OF EQUIPMENT,
E.G. CHAD.
VANCE

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